



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

August 2012



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) regularly scans provincial and territorial government websites in order to follow policy and program developments related to our core work and interests. A partial list includes: disability, education, health, housing, income security, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth. This tracking is intended to inform our analysis of policy trends. Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date, jurisdiction and category.

Newfoundland and Labrador

No updates this month.

Nova Scotia

COMMUNITIES

In 2012-13, the Accessible Transportation Assistance Program will make \$250,000 available for accessible transportation purchases in six rural communities across the province. The program will pay up to 50 percent of capital costs to a maximum of \$50,000 for new vehicles. It also offers up to \$10,000 for used vehicles and \$15,000 to modify existing vehicles. <http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20120801001>

New Brunswick

CHILD CARE

The province has reinstated a \$2.75 hourly wage enhancement for early learning and child care staff, effective September 1 and retroactive to April 1, 2012. The action supports pay equity measures for early learning and child care staff and is part of the three-year, \$38-million early childhood action plan, Putting Children First. The province has committed to investing more than \$4 million over three years to increase wage subsidies for child care workers, early learning and child care educators, and support workers to improve the quality of early learning and child care. http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2012.08.0802.html

HEALTH

Applications are now available for New Brunswick's dental and vision plan for children of low-income families. Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision comes into effect September 1. The vision portion will cover basic items such as yearly exams, lenses and frames. The dental component will cover basic items such as regular exams, x-rays and extractions, with some focus on preventative treatments. Children who currently receive vision and dental benefits under Social Development's Health Services Program will be automatically transferred to the new dental and vision plan. http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2012.08.0714.html

Prince Edward Island

EDUCATION

The province will institute a zero percent interest rate on the Provincial Student Loan Program, effective October 1, 2012. The program will apply to loans issued after January 1, 2001 and held by the PEI Student Financial Assistance Corporation. The total annual cost of this measure will be approximately \$500,000. Savings on the average student loan in the first year of repayment will be about \$1,000. <http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=8513&dept=&lang=E>



\$60,000 will expand the Best Start Program, bringing overall funding to more than \$1 million annually. Best Start is a voluntary in-home visiting program that identifies and provides service to families who face challenges and who can benefit from additional support. The new funding will allow families to receive Best Start services until their child is 36 months old (previously, the service was only available only for children up to 24 months). The program has been operating for more than 10 years across the province. It is offered by CHANCES Family Centre in partnership with Public Health Nursing and six other Family Resource Centres. More than 400 families used the program in 2011-12.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=8538&dept=&lang=E>

Québec

RECREATION

Announcement of \$14 million over five years for sports federations. Investments Sports (Placements Sports) will award matching grants in order to encourage greater contribution levels from individuals, private corporations and foundations. Over the first two years, sports federations will also receive grants to assist in collecting donations.

<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/salle-de-presse/communiqués-de-presse/detail/article/emfinancement-des-federations-sportives-quebecoises-em-lancement-du-programme-placements/>

Ontario

MUNICIPALITIES

Announcement of a new Municipal Infrastructure Strategy that will require small, rural and northern municipalities requesting provincial infrastructure funding to show how projects fit within a comprehensive asset management plan. \$60 million will be available over the next three years to municipalities. Up to \$9 million will be used to help municipalities prepare their plans. Remaining funds will be directed to critical projects identified in those finalized plans.

<http://news.ontario.ca/moi/en/2012/08/ontario-launches-municipal-infrastructure-strategy.html>

Manitoba

No updates this month.

Saskatchewan

HEALTH

The province is continuing to implement Lean concepts across its health care system. (Lean is a patient-centred approach to identifying and eliminating non-value-adding activities and reducing waste within an organization.) Improvement efforts focus on strategic priorities including

the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative, primary health care, safety and shared services. More than 200 Lean projects are currently under way. *The original internet link to this item is no longer available.*

<http://hqc.sk.ca/Portals/0/documents/lean-faq.pdf>

Alberta

EDUCATION

Launch of an online Back to School Toolkit featuring a collection of resources and information to help students, parents and education professionals prepare for a successful school year. The toolkit can be found at: www.education.alberta.ca/backtoschool.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=328222AD6F5D7-DF37-41C7-D2FB-1F3B4EEDAC7F>

British Columbia

No updates this month.

Yukon Territory

No updates this month.

Northwest Territories

HOUSING

NWT's Transitional Rent Supplement Program will begin on September 1, 2012. It supports low- to moderate-income residents in private market rental housing, and provides a rent subsidy of up to \$500 per month for two years. The Territory's Shelter Policy Review and strategic housing plan (Building for the Future) showed that many residents do not qualify for public housing and struggle with housing costs. Eligible applicants must be 19 years or older, residents of the territory for at least one year, living in private market rental housing and paying more than 30 percent of their income for shelter.

<http://news.exec.gov.nt.ca/transitional-rent-supplement-program/>

Nunavut

No updates this month.